THE BLAST

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WORSHIPING THE GOD OF DYNAMITE

Worshiping the God of Dynamite

MILITARISM is the worship of the mailed fist, of force and violence, of wholesale slaughter by powder, lead and dynamite.

The tragedy of July 22d, when a bomb or infernal machine was exploded with fatal results during the Preparedness parade, is to be traced directly to the murder psychology developed by the military preparedness agitation. That agitation is imbuing the minds of the people with national and racial antagonisms, with thoughts of hatred, violence and slaughter. If you persist in charging the social atmosphere with the spirit of violence and murder, you may expect sooner or later to reap the inevitable results.

The advocates of militarism are creating this spirit. What are Preparedness parades for but to pave the way for wholesale murder? You may disguise it with the cloak of patriotism and national defense, but whatever its uniform, Preparedness means preparation to kill, to kill on a large scale.

To try to connect the Anarchists, the I. W. W., the Labor elements or the participants in the Peace meeting with the bomb tragedy is stupid. The act was obviously the work of an individual who evidently sought to express his opposition to Preparedness for Slaughter by using the ammunition of Preparedness. Terrible as the tragedy is, it is merely a foretaste in miniature of what the people may expect, multiplied a million times, from the Preparedness insanity. It should serve as a lesson of the real meaning and menace of Preparedness and of the spirit it is already generating among the people.

It is also possible that the bomb was meant as an answer to the Chamber of Commerce to its declaration of war on organized Labor of San Francisco. In any event it is clear that oppression and threats from above, and preparation for military and industrial slaughter, inevitably lead to bitter resentment and violent opposition below.

Force, violence and murder are the keynote of our whole civilization. We may get hysterical over the bomb tragedy, rage and rave over it, and condemn this and condemn that. But we will not prevent the recurrence of such acts unless we seek and find the underlying CAUSES. Creating special detective bureaus, offering greed-exciting rewards, or thundering anathemas by pulpit and press will not do the least to solve the question. All that only serves to confuse the minds of the people, to arouse cupidity and to create new opportunities for graft and oppression.

If the people of San Francisco really want to prevent the recurrence of such acts of violence, let them realize that as long as the workers are exploited and robbed of their product, we will have poverty and unemployment, desperation, wars and crime of every kind. Abolish the conditions that foster privileged monopoly on the back of Labor and you will do away with the strife and antagonism of our life, with crime and war, with Preparedness parades and the spirit of violence bred by them.

Planning Another 11th of November

ON THE afternoon of July 22d, while the Preparedness parade was in progress, a bomb exploded on Steuart street, San Francisco. The explosion cost the lives of nine persons who were in the immediate vicinity.

As usual, in such cases, the local authorities immediately raised the cry of "Anarchist." The pulpit and the yellow press began inciting the populace to mob violence, and the Hearst papers openly advocated the immediate extermination of every radical and progressive element in San Francisco, aye, in the whole country.

It must be said to the lasting credit of the people of San Francisco that they refused to be moved by the homicidal hysteria of Hearst and his press prostitutes. Rave as he may in his blood-dripping editorials, the public remained calm and reasonable, awaiting the result of three separate investigations, instituted by the Federal authorities, the Post Office and the police.

It appears that hundreds of letters and postal cards had been mailed to prominent citizens as well as to local newspapers, *warning* them that an act of violence was to be executed against the Preparedness parade. Incredible as it may sound, none of the papers or the leaders of the parade—all of whom had been warned days and weeks before the parade, according to the testimony of the police and postal authorities,—permitted the people to get the least hint of the planned catastrophe.

Thornwell Mullally, grand marshal of the parade, has since admitted that he himself received similar warnings, and yet he cruelly and apparently wilfully led the paraders to what might have been certain death.

Why? Why were the public not warned by those who had been warned? That is the question that is burning in the hearts of the people. It is especially vital to those who have lost friends and relatives in the explosion.

Why were the people of San Francisco not warned? Why were they blindly led to slaughter?

And what has become of the Federal and police investigations of the numerous letters of warning sent through the post office? Why is not the writer, or writers, apprehended? *Why has the search for them been abandoned?*

The people of San Francisco want to know. They demand an answer.

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Several weeks previous to the Preparedness parade, during the strike of the Longshoremen, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce issued a public ultimatum declaring war on organized Labor. At the mass meeting of Big Business, held under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce, the employers threw down the gauntlet to Labor. The chairman of the meeting was Frederick J. Koster, president of the Chamber of Commerce, and the keynote of the assembly was struck by Captain Robert Dollar, of the Ship Owners' Association, when he said that "the only way to settle the strike is to send several ambulance loads of strikers to the hospital."

This sentiment was vociferously applauded by the assembly of over 1000 respectable, *law-abiding* business men. Nor did this mass meeting merely talk. It acted. It acted as it talked. A Law and Order committee of 100 was elected with F. J. Koster as chairman and Captain Dollar as one of its most efficient mem-

bers. A fund of $1,000,000 was pledged *to fight the unions* and to turn the strongly organized city of San Francisco into an open-shop town like Los Angeles.

This Law and Order committee of 100, the Vigilante body of employers, has since taken charge of the city. It represents less than one-tenth of the citizenship, but it is in practical control of the District Attorney's office and of the police, and is dictating the policy of the local press. It is crowding the police courts with its members when union men are arrested for picketing. Its attorneys are at the side of the public prosecutor for the purpose of influencing the judges and railroading the strikers to prison.

It is this Law and Order committee that is now bossing the city of San Francisco. The Vigilantes have usurped the administrative and executive power of the city government. Mayor Rolph and Police Chief White have been virtually stripped of authority, and the Chamber of Commerce has constituted itself investigator, prosecutor, and judge of the situation.

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What are the Vigilantes of Big Business doing?

In pursuit of the scheme to kill the unions of San Francisco and make it an open-shop scab town, they have determined to terrorize organized Labor in the persons of its best-known radical representatives. At first they tried to victimize the speakers at the Peace meeting, held in protest against Preparedness a few days before the parade. They maliciously charged them with responsibility for the tragedy. This failing, they instituted a man-hunt after the prominent Anarchists that happened to be in the city at the time. They raided the office of THE BLAST, attempted to incite mobs against the lectures of Emma Goldman, and tried to suppress all street meetings. All this falling flat, they decided to exploit the bomb tragedy to further their warfare against unionism. The order went out to arrest those known as the most energetic and uncompromising Labor men.

Who are the best hated men by the bosses of San Francisco? **Edward D. Nolan** and **Tom Mooney.** Forthwith both of them were arrested, thrown into prison, tortured with the third degree, and held incommunicado as in the darkest days of the Spanish Inquisition.

Ed Nolan, an idealist and active union man, is one of the most beautiful personalities in the American Labor movement. For years he has been recognized as one of the most intelligent and absolutely incorruptible Labor men, and as such he is beloved by the rank and file of the workers of San Francisco. He had just returned from the Machinists' convention in Baltimore, to which he was a delegate, when he was arrested.

Tom Mooney is a rare type of devoted and energetic worker, cordially hated by every corrupt Labor politician, but respected and admired by the intelligent element of the toilers. He is a member of the Moulders' Union, a former delegate to the Labor Council, and a man who has been active in every important struggle of the workers of San Francisco for almost a decade. As the authorized organizer of the International Carmen's Union, Mooney recently tried to organize the motormen and conductors of the United Railroads Company of San Francisco. A strike of the platform men, attempted on July 14th, failed to come to a head, and the United Railroads immediately marked Mooney for their victim. As a matter of fact, the U. R. R. had several weeks previously put up bulletins at the car barns denouncing Mooney as a dynamiter and warning their men to have nothing to do with him, on pain of immediate discharge. By a rather peculiar "coincidence" the U. R. R. denounced Mooney as a dynamiter one day *previous* to the blowing up of some supply towers of the company.

Briefly, the bosses have many old grudges against Tom Mooney for his activity in former strikes. Thus they did their utmost to railroad him to the penitentiary several years before, during the gas works strike, but after three trials Mooney was exonerated and acquitted by a jury.

It was in connection with this attempted railroading of Mooney that the authorities succeeded in sending **Warren K. Billings** to prison, the man who is now charged, together with Mooney, with having been a principal in the bomb affair. Billings was formerly president of the Shoe Workers' Union, and he has always claimed that he was sent to prison on a police frame-up.

Among the others indicted for murder in this connection are **Israel Weinberg,** one of the directors of the Jitney Bus Union, which organization has long been a sharp thorn in the side of the U. R. R., and **Mrs. Rena Hermann Mooney,** wife of Tom Mooney, an artist and music teacher.

There were also arrested Julius Kastner, an Austrian; Tom Ryan, a picket of the Restaurant Workers, and Mrs. Belle Lavin, all of them finally discharged as perfectly innocent, after having been subjected to vile indignities, brutally sweated and held incommunicado for over a week.

* * * *

Those who know Nolan, Mooney, Weinberg and Billings are absolutely certain that they are perfectly innocent of any connection with the bomb explosion. The unions to which these men belong have already signified their full confidence in them, and the Labor Council has voiced the firm conviction that our imprisoned friends have been picked as the victims of the bosses.

The whole Labor movement of San Francisco knows that **in the persons of Nolan, Mooney, Weinberg and Billings the employers seek to terrorize organized Labor.** It is the openly avowed purpose of the Chamber of Big Business to paralyze and destroy the whole Labor movement on the Coast. The arrest and indictment on the charge of murder of Nolan, Mooney et al. is but the masters' entering wedge, with the ultimate purpose of exterminating unionism in San Francisco and enthroning the ruthless will of Big Business.

The workers know what this means. The Chamber of Commerce is resorting to drastic, desperate methods. It is the opening chapter of their promised relentless warfare on Labor.

THE BLAST is the voice of the awakening toilers. It will fight to the last ditch this heinous murder conspiracy of Capital. The enemy is athirst for blood: it is planning to transplant to San Francisco the gallows of 1887 when five of Labor's best and truest friends were strangled to death in Chicago. We feel that the workers of America will not permit a repetition of that five-fold judicial murder. It is the solemn duty of every lover of liberty and friend of Labor to hasten to the rescue. Action is necessary—quick action—immediate, to prevent the planned diabolic outrage. Agitation and funds are needed at once. Publicity is necessary to enlighten the people about the bloody vengeance Capital is scheming. No stone must be left unturned to expose the vile conspiracy of the bosses and to tear Labor's prisoners of war from the rapacious maw of the bloodthirsty masters.

THE BLAST hereby pledges its unconditional support to these victims of the Law and Order canaille. All threats and intimidation notwithstanding, we are determined to devote our time, ability and energy to save these brave soldiers in the war of humanity from the doom already spoken against them by the enemies of Labor, of Progress, of Humanity. We solemnly appeal to every fair-minded and liberty-loving man and woman to respond to the call and to respond ere it is too late. Now is the time to demonstrate, once for all, that we of the awakened social consciousness will not tolerate a repetition of the hellish crime of the 11th of November, 1887.

THE BLAST will gladly accept contributions for the defense.

THE BLAST

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Violence and Anarchism

Alexander Berkman

IT IS growing rather monotonous to hear the cry of "Anarchist conspiracy" raised whenever and wherever there happens an "unlawful" shot or bomb explosion.

Let us consider the matter dispassionately. Is violence specifically Anarchistic? Is the taking of human life such a very unusual occurrence among "civilized" peoples? Is our whole social existence anything but an uninterrupted series of murder, assassination, mutilation? All our honored institutions are rooted in the very spirit of murder. Do we build warships for educational purposes? Is the army a Sunday school? Our police, jails and penitentiaries—what purpose do they serve but to suppress, kill and maim? Is the gallows the symbol of our brotherhood, the electric chair the proof of our humanitarianism?

"All these things are necessary evils," we are told by the self-satisfied. True, they are necessary; necessary to preserve society *as it is*. But has it ever occurred to the "good citizen" whether it is really necessary to preserve things as they are? Is it indeed worth while?

Organized society can have but one *raison d'etre;* namely, the greatest good of its members. Let us examine, then, whether society, as at present constituted, can be justly said to fulfill its mission.

No life, individual or collective, is possible without the means of subsistence. The social members supplying these means are, consequently, the life-givers of the community. And who are they? The question answers itself automatically: the producers of the country's wealth are the conservators of its life. All members and classes of society should equally benefit by the fact of our combined effort as a society. But if, for any reason, distinctions are to be made, the producing class, the real backbone of the social body, should have the preference.

In other words, the workers are the ones who should enjoy the greatest benefits arising from social organization. That is the true mission of human society. Does the latter accomplish it? Does it come anywhere near accomplishment?

By no means. The producers are the very ones on whose shoulders rests the whole burden of our social evils. They are the disinherited, the submerged. The products of their toil are the property of some one else; the land and machinery, without which no production is possible, are not owned by them; as a result, they are forced to sell their labor for whatever pittance the employers condescend to give. Hence poverty, starvation, and widespread misery among the very class which, as the sole producer, has the best claim to enjoy the blessings of organized social life.

To support, defend and perpetuate these unjust and terrible conditions it is necessary to have police, prisons, laws and government. For the disinherited are not content to forever starve in the midst of plenty, and the exploited are beginning to cry out against their cruel bondage.

These cries, these signs of rebellious dissatisfaction must be stifled. That is the mission of law and government: to preserve things as they are; to secure to the rich their stolen wealth; to strangle the voice of popular discontent.

Such is the social life of "civilized" countries. A life of misery and degradation, of economic exploitation, governmental suppression, legal brutality and judicial murder. Sham, injustice and tyranny are the synonyms of organized society. Shall we preserve it as it is? Is it necessary and desirable? Is it even possible?

* * * *

"But you can't regenerate society by violence, by a bomb," the well-meaning people argue.

Indeed, full well we know we cannot. Be fair; give ear. Do not confound the philosophy of a better, freer and happier life with an *act resulting from the very evils which that philosophy seeks to abolish.*

Anarchism is the science of social order, as opposed to existing disorder; of brotherhood, as against present Ishmaelitism; of individual liberty and well-being, as opposed to legal oppression, robbery and universal misery.

This condition of social regeneration cannot be achieved by the will or act of any man or party. The enlightenment of the workers regarding the evils of wage slavery, the awakening of the public conscience to a clearer understanding of liberty and justice—these are the forces which will abolish all forms of bondage, political, economical and social, replacing present institutions by free co-operation and the solidarity of communal effort.

"But the bomb?" cry the judges in and out of court. The bomb is the echo of your cannon, trained upon our starving brothers; it is the cry of the murdered striker; 'tis the voice of hungry women and children; the shriek of the maimed and torn in your industrial slaughter houses; it is the dull thud of the policeman's club upon a defenseless head; 'tis the shadow of the crisis, the rumbling of suppressed earthquake—it is Desperation's lightning out of an atmosphere of degradation and misery that king, president and plutocrat have heaped upon humanity. *The bomb is the ghost of your past crimes.*

You may foam and legislate, arrest, imprison and deport. You may still further tighten the thumb-screws of persecution, erect more gallows, and build electric chairs. Pitiful fools! Thus was Christ crucified as a disturber of "Caesar's peace." Did Golgotha suppress his teaching? Have the unspeakable tortures of the Inquisition eradicated free thought? Did Louis XVI save his crown—or his head—by *lettre de cachet?* Has the cause of the Abolitionists been defeated by the judicial murder of John Brown?

"Our graves will speak louder than the voices you strangle!" In spite of all the strenuous governmental, capitalistic and journalistic efforts to misrepresent and suppress Anarchists and Anarchism—because of those efforts—the people will yet learn the truth.

Valuation of Life

R. M.

AFTER the Sepoy Rebellion in India, the British military authorities discovered a peculiar condition among the English troops. The common soldier's mind had undergone terrible days of fighting and nights of slaughter until human life meant little to him any longer. For a typical instance, one soldier asked another, "Got a light, Joe?" "Go to hell, you blighter," was the reply. Whereupon the man who needed a light ripped the stomach of the other open with a knife. Cases of that kind became so frequent after the Sepoy Rebellion that the army authorities had to take special measures to separate the soldiers from their small arms. Just the dwelling upon the idea of slaughter wears away a man's valuation of human life and promotes in his mind morbid tendencies to destroy.

I had an example of the same thing myself recently when I crossed the sea en route to Europe as a war correspondent. Everybody on the ship was talking war, weapons, killing. In war time the soldiers particularly idealize the bayonet. They call it "Rosalie" and sing songs to it as their "cold steel sweetheart." Morning, noon and night, this wild hubbub of war-talk went on, until one man went crazy and imagined that it was his duty to kill somebody. He tried to throw me into the sea. With a fight I saved myself, but his enthusiasm was too great to be thwarted, so with a wild laugh he threw himself into the sea and was drowned.

There are some of us to whom the idea of killing is repellant. I, for one, don't like guns, knives, bayonets, dynamite, guncotton and artillery. I hate such things because I hate the thing they are made for—killing.

We who dislike killing don't believe in it, and don't believe in getting prepared to kill—we who think that gun-toting, bomb-making, cannon-making and bloodthirstiness make the lowest ideal that man can stoop to—we are called anti-militarists. Since we do not like those things, we naturally express our dislike of the idealization of militarism. We have said frankly, honestly and openly that we do not believe in spilling blood.

But others have a love for military things, for guns, ammunition. They have been carrying on a campaign for many months, crying to the whole world: "Arm! Prepare! Be skilled in killing! Let us know how to kill better than any other people can!"

With all our hearts and heads we believe that that sort of talk is wrong, is injurious to the character of men and boys and women. We believe that it lowers the standards of every person who hears such a thing, lessens their respect for human life, human progress and decency. We believe that it nurtures all that is morbid in the human brain, all the traits that go back to the jungle from which the human race has progressed. And yet, when a cataclysm comes, when in the midst of a demonstration of the military ideal, some person uses an explosive (the very munition of war that is being idealized) thereby killing innocent sightseers and paraders who were probably forced to march by employers—those very persons who have trained morbid minds to violence, will blame *us* for the occurrence!

To those of you who are in the habit of thinking, who do not blindly take whatever rot you may see in the papers for the solemn truth, we ask—do you not think it possible that the long months of ranting by "preparationists," interventionists and explosive manufacturers may have had the effect of driving an over-susceptible brain to using the very munition for which they preach?

Down With the Anarchists!

WE must get rid of the Anarchists! They are a menace to society. Does not Hearst say so? Do not the M. & M. and the gentlemen of the Chamber of Commerce, who have also declared war on Labor, assure us that the Anarchists are dangerous and that they are responsible for all our troubles? Does not every skinner of Labor and every grafting politician shout against the Anarchists? Isn't that enough to prove that the Anarchists are dangerous?

But why are all the money bags and their hirelings so unanimous in condemning the Anarchists? Generally they disagree on many questions and they bitterly fight each other in their business and social life. But on TWO questions they are always in accord.

What are those two questions that all the capitalists and profit mongers are always in perfect agreement on? They are these:

Smash the Labor Unions!
Hang the Anarchists!

WHY? Because the Labor Unions are cutting the bosses' profits by constantly demanding higher wages. And the Anarchists want to abolish the boss altogether.

Now, what is the matter with the Anarchists? What do you really know about them, except the lies and misrepresentations of their enemies—who are also the enemies of the workers and opposed to every advancement of Labor? If you stop to think of it, you really know nothing of the Anarchists and their teachings. Your masters and their press have taken good care that you shouldn't learn the truth about them. Why? Because as long as they can keep you busy shouting against the Anarchists, they are safe in their saddle on the backs of the people.

That's the whole secret.

What do the Anarchists really want? When you know that, you will be able to decide for yourself whether the Anarchists are your enemies or your friends.

The Anarchists say that it is not necessary to have murder and crime, poverty and corruption in the world. They say that we are cursed with these evils because a handful of people have monopolized the earth and all the wealth of the country. But who produces that wealth? Who builds the railroads, who digs the coal, who works in the fields and factories? You can answer that question for yourself. It is the toilers who do all the work and who produce all that we have in the world.

The Anarchists say: The products of Labor should belong to the producers. The industries should be carried on to minister to the needs of the people instead of for profit, as at present. Abolishing monopoly in land and in the sources of production, and making the opportunity for production accessible to all, would do away with capitalism and introduce free and equal distribution. That, in turn, would do away with laws and government, as there would be no need for them, government serving only to conserve the institutions of today and to protect the masters in their exploitation of the people. It would abolish war and crime, because the incentive to either would be lacking. It would be a society of real freedom, without coercion or violence, based on the voluntary communal arrangement of "To each according to his needs; from each according to his ability."

That is what the Anarchists teach. Suppose they are all wrong. Are you going to prove it by hanging them? If they are wrong, the people will not accept

A Raid and a Visit

AT LAST! A squad of detectives of the newly created bomb bureau came down upon the office of THE BLAST. A raid, b'gosh!

It happened a whole week after the bomb explosion. Why did they give us so much time to "prepare"? "For ways and tricks peculiar, etc." Stupidity alone does not exhaust the explanation. Of course the police knew that we had nothing to do with the explosion. Cool and gentle as we are, we never explode. The guardians knew there was no cause for a raid. But having spent much precious time without securing the least clue to the perpetrator of the bomb, *something* had to be done. A special police bomb bureau had been created. Well, the bureau had to show that it was on the job.

The raid on THE BLAST was therefore an afterthought. It was led by Assistant District Attorney Cunha and three other "detectives," among them Swanson, formerly the local chief of the Pinkerton agency. We say "detectives" in quotation marks: the degree of intelligence the raiders showed convinced us that they couldn't detect the trail of an elephant on a muddy cowpath. They actually asked me whether I had explosives in the house! Of course I had. I thought Cunha's face blanched perceptibly when I held out to him a .38-calibre revolver, with the remark: "It's loaded and it's liable to explode." "This isn't what we want," he said rather petulantly, giving back the gun to me. But when I returned to the room a few minutes later I noticed that he had very cautiously removed the bullets from the revolver. Safety first!

I had another kind of explosive in the house which I strongly recommended to the visitors. It was mental dynamite in the form of copies of THE BLAST, Anarchist pamphlets and books. But the raiders didn't seem to care much for that kind of awakener. After a vain search for bombs, lasting four hours, they depaprted,

their ideas, and therefore there can be no danger from them. But, if they are right, it would be good for us to find it out. In any case it is a question of learning what these Anarchists really want. Let the people hear them.

But how about violence? you say. Don't the Anarchists preach and practice violence and murder?

They don't. On the contrary, the Anarchists hold life as the most sacred thing. That's why they want to change the present order of things where everyone's hand is against his brother, and where war, wholesale slaughter in the pursuit of the dollar, bloodshed in the field, factory and workshop is the order of the day. The poverty, misery and bitter industrial warfare, the crimes, suicides and murder committed every day of the year in this country will convince any man of intelligence that in present society we have plenty of Law, but mighty little order or peace.

Anarchism means OPPOSITION to violence, by whomever committed, even if it be by the government. The government has no more right to murder than the individual. Anarchism is therefore opposition to violence as well as to government forcibly imposed on man.

The Anarchists value human life. In fact, no one values it more. Why, then, are the Anarchists always blamed for every act of violence? Because your rulers and exploiters want to keep you prejudiced against the Anarchists, so you will never find out what the Anarchists really want, and the masters will remain safe in their monopoly of life.

Now, what are facts about violence? Crimes of every kind happen every day. Are the Anarchists responsible for them? Or is it not rather misery and desperation that drive people to commit such acts? Does a millionaire go out on the street and knock you down with a gaspipe to rob you of a few dollars? O, no. He builds a factory and robs his workers in a way that is much safer, more profitable and within the law.

Who, then, commits acts of violence? The desperate man, of course. He to whom no other resort seems open. Violence is committed by all kinds of people. Such violence is mostly for the purpose of theft or robbery. But there are also cases where it is done for social reasons. Such impersonal acts of violence have, from time immemorial, been the reply of goaded and desperate classes, and goaded and desperate individuals, to wrongs from their fellow-men, which they felt to be intolerable. Such acts are the violent RECOIL from violence, whether aggressive or repressive; they are the last desperate struggle of outraged and exasperated human nature for breathing space and life. And their CAUSE LIES NOT IN ANY SPECIAL CONVICTION, BUT IN HUMAN NATURE ITSELF. The whole course of history, political and social, is strewn with evidence of this fact. To go no further, take the Revolutionists of Russia, the Fenians and Sinn Feiners of Ireland, the Republicans of Italy. Were those people Anarchists? No. Did they all hold the same political opinions? No. But all were driven by desperate circumstances into this terrible form of revolt.

Anarchists, as well as others, have sometimes committed acts of violence. Do you hold the Republican Party responsible for every act committed by a Republican? Or the Democratic Party, or the Presbyterian or Methodist Church responsible for acts of individual members? It would be stupid to do so.

Under miserable conditions of life, any vision of the possibility of better things makes the present misery more intolerable, and spurs those who suffer to the most energetic struggles to improve their lot, and if these struggles only immediately result in sharper misery, the outcome is sheer desperation. In our present society, for instance, an exploited wage worker, who catches a glimpse of what work and life might and ought to be, finds the toilsome routine and the squalor of his existence almost intolerable; and even when he has the resolution and courage to continue steadily working his best, and waiting until new ideas have so permeated society as to pave the way for better times, the mere fact that he has such ideas and tries to spread them brings him into difficulties with his employers. How many thousands of rebel workers, of Socialists, of Industrialists and Syndicalists, but above all of Anarchists, have lost work and even the chance of work, solely on the ground of their opinions? It is only the specially gifted craftsman who, if he be a zealous propagandist, can hope to retain permanent employment. And what happens to a man with his brain working actively with a ferment of new ideas, with a vision before his eyes of a new hope dawning for toiling and agonizing men, with the knowledge that his suffering and that of his fellows in misery is not caused by the cruelty of fate, but by the injustice of other human beings—what happens to such a man when he sees those dear to him starving, when he himself is starved? Some natures in such a plight, and those by no means the least social or the least sensitive, will become violent, and will even feel that their violence is social and not anti-social, that in striking when and how they can, they are striking, not for themselves, but for human nature, outraged and despoiled in their persons and in those of their fellow sufferers. And

obviously dissatisfied. I knew they wouldn't be happy til they found what they were looking for, but I don't believe in coddling people.

They appropriated, however, copies of our California subscription list, shockingly surprised to find that there were so many Anarchists in the otherwise happy and peaceful Golden State.

A few days later Miss Fitzgerald and myself were "invited" by the chief to visit headquarters. There we were forced to waste five perfectly good hours in answering fool questions. I found the "superior" officials of the District Attorney's office and of the Detective Bureau of a much inferior intelligence than similar officials in other cities. Not a single one of my half dozen inquisitors, including Assistant District Attorney James Brennan, showed the faintest understanding of social problems or of modern movements. I was glad of the opportunity to explain the philosophy of Anarchism to the assembled representatives of government. "There is no reason why even they should not learn something," I thought. But I soon gave up the attempt as hopeless when Detective Swanson, considered the most intelligent of the crew, met one of my arguments with this profound parry: "It's nonsense to say the land is monopolized. If you got enough money you can buy any piece of land you want."

The keynote of their intelligence and decency was finally struck by Assistant District Attorney Brennan (an aspirant for a Senator's toga) when he repeatedly shouted at me, "Every Anarchist is a criminal. We'll hang you all, every one of you!"

The same gentleman tried to intimidate and cajole, in turn, my associate worker, Miss Fitzgerald. He very discreetly inquired whether we hang our underwear on the same clothesline, and in the next breath wondered why "such a nice sweet lady with such a good Irish name" could have anything in common with the terrible Anarchists. He thundered maledictions on my unprotected head and assured her that I am the worst criminal in the country, intimately associated with every crook.

In her calm, well-poised manner Miss Fitzgerald replied that she was proud to be connected with the Anarchists; but she has been wondering ever since what had been my association with the District Attorney's office.

But for a quick presto change artist Mr. Brennan beats the champion vaudeville performers. When we were "invited" to his office the next day, I hardly knew him. His manner had completely changed. A bully the previous day, he was now the acme of Chesterfieldianism. Will Mr. Berkman please be seated? Will Mr. Berkman be good enough to answer a question or two? etc.

I was wondering what ruse was being

are we, who ourselves are not in this horrible predicament, to stand by and coldly condemn these piteous victims of the Furies and Fates? Are we to decry as miscreants these human beings who act with heroic self-devotion, often sacrificing their lives in protest, where less social and less energetic natures would lie down and grovel in abject submission to injustice and wrong? Are we to join the ignorant and brutal outcry which stigmatizes such men as monsters of wickedness, gratuitously running amuck in a harmonious and innocently peaceful society? NO! We hate murder with a hatred that may seem absurdly exaggerated to apologists for war, industrial slaughter and Ludlow massacres, to callous acquiescers in governmental and plutocratic violence, but we decline in such cases of homicide as those of which we are treating, to be guilty of the cruel injustice of flinging the whole responsibility of the deed upon the immediate perpetrator. The guilt of these homicides lies upon every man and woman who, intentionally or by cold indifference, helps to keep up social conditions that drive human beings to despair. The man who flings his whole life into the attempt, often at the cost of his own life, to protest against the wrongs of his fellow-men, is a saint compared to the active and passive upholders of cruelty and injustice, even if his protest destroy other lives besides his own. Let him who is without sin in society cast the first stone at such a one.

THE BLAST GROUP
GROUP FREEDOM
ITALIAN ANARCHIST GROUP VOLONTA
UNION OF RUSSIAN WORKERS

Per { ALEXANDER BERKMAN
EMMA GOLDMAN

Some Direct Questions for the District Attorney

In these columns Questions will be asked and Truths will be told that no other local paper dares to breathe. These columns are open to the public.

Question 1. What has become of Mrs. William Hinckley Taylor, who led the Women's Division of the Preparedness parade? She repeatedly declared that a note of warning had been handed to her by a small swarthy man just before the explosion. Where is that note? Why is the District Attorney's office silent about it? Who wrote that note? And where is that swarthy man? He is not among those under arrest.

Question 2. Mr. Prendergast, a veteran of the Spanish War, was among those knocked down by the force of the explosion. He has informed the authorities that he saw the man who placed the suitcase on the sidewalk and that he saw the bomb explode. He was positive that it was not Billings nor anyone else under arrest. Where is Mr. Prendergast? *Why has he suddenly disappeared from his home in Oakland?* Was he spirited away because his testimony would exonerate the men chosen as victims?

Question 3. Estelle Smith, identifier in chief of the prosecution, at first claimed that she saw a tall man with a drooping mustache in company with a short stout woman wearing thick glasses. Why has she changed her mind since she has talked with the police? Why did she subsequently identify Tom Mooney and his wife as the couple she saw, considering that neither of them answers to her original description?

Question 4. What has become of the scores of plug-uglies imported to break the Longshoremen's strike? Why have they so suddenly disappeared from the city, now that the Culinary Workers' strike is on, immediately after the explosion?

Question 5. Why were Mrs. Belle Lavin and T. Ryan arrested as dynamiters, kept 48 hours without food, water or sleep, and then discharged without even being booked on the police blotter? Are prisoners being tortured to secure confessions?

Question 6. Why are absolutely false rumors circulated from headquarters that each bomb prisoner has "confessed"? Are you trying the bomb case in the newspapers, and is the evidence of the prosecution so flimsy that the public mind must be poisoned with such lies in order to secure a conviction?

Question 7. Why are radicals gratuitously insulted in your office, Mr. District Attorney? Why was a prominent labor man invited by your assistant Cunha the other evening only to be abused and physically attacked by the "superior" official, who was evidently under the influence of liquor? Have you placed the bomb "investigation" in the hands of irresponsible rummies and drunken bullies?

Question 8. Does your office represent the taxpayers, or the U. R. R. and Mr. Koster of the Law and Order Committee? Why are you so busy picking up the intelligent foreign workers and Anarchists and turning them over to the immigration authorities, only to have them locked up for a week and then released without even an apology for your blundering stupidity?

THIS is a special issue of THE BLAST in the interest of the Labor men that Big Business wants to hang in San Francisco. The case is of utmost importance. A repetition of the judicial murders of 1887 must be prevented at all cost. Labor and radical papers are welcome to reprint the material published in THE BLAST.

concocted in that atavistic brain when Mr. Brennan naively volunteered the explanation for his changed attitude. "Mr. Berkman, I had dinner yesterday with Professor ——— of the University at Berkeley. We discussed you and your book. He thinks very highly of you."

I pitied him. But I was glad that he had decency enough not to offer to shake hands when I left. It saved him the experience of Assistant District Attorney Cunha, THE BLAST raider, whose proffered hand I had refused to touch.

On the Firing Line

COMRADES Cesare Veglio, Louis Aubert, and Julien Potter, arrested for distributing the leaflet, "Down With the Anarchists!" were quickly "tried" in Judge Sullivan's court and sentenced to 90 days in jail.

But the prosecution reckoned without the host. Friends of the arrested immediately blocked the judicial farce. An appeal was filed, bail secured, and now our good comrades are all watching proceedings from the outside instead of from behind the bars.

Our friend Jacob Lizzul, arrested for the same terrible crime, demanded a jury trial and is now also out on bail. It is well for the authorities to know that we emphatically refuse to be railroaded to prison or to be otherwise victimized.

The case of T. Sidorin, "picked up" because he is a "Rooshan," has just been decided by the immigration officials. Sidorin has been in this country over four years, and cannot be deported. But the dirty work continues. Released by the Federal authorities, he is now held on the charge of "disturbing the peace" by having in his hand a copy of our leaflet. He is out on bail.

A SIMILAR attempt to punish and terrorize the workers by hanging or imprisoning its most active and devoted friends is now being made in Minnesota in connection with the strike of the iron miners. Carlo Tresca and several other brave spirits are held on charges of murder committed by the Hessians of the Steel Trust. We will deal at greater length with the Minnesota situation, and with the other great strikes now convulsing the country, in our next issue. For the present it is appropriate to point out that the great lesson for the workers to learn is *solidarity*. Labor will have no real strength till the man with the pick is the full brother of the man at the throttle.

WE have printed 50,000 copies of the circular, "Down With the Anarchists!" It is a clear, enlightening document. Be sure to give some copies to your acquaintances and neighbors. The circular can be had free through THE BLAST. Contributions to help defray cost of printing and mailing will not be refused.

THE police and detective bureaus have assured us that they mean to kill THE BLAST. "Why, your cartoons alone are enough to incite to riot!" they told us.

But THE BLAST is *not* going to be killed. Not without a hard fight, anyhow. We have printed an extra large issue this time. If you want to help save the lives of Nolan, Mooney, Weinberg and Billings —the selected victims of the enemy—then help spread the paper. Order bundle copies. Get subscribers. Talk alone will not do. Get busy. Help swell the War Fund of THE BLAST.

A War Fund for The Blast

THE BLAST has been marked by the police for destruction. It is a sharp thorn in the flesh of the Law and Order reactionists. Their avowed purpose is to strangle every voice raised in protest against official outrage and injustice.

But we are determined to keep THE BLAST going. Never before was this paper as vitally needed as now. With the local press in complete control of the reaction, none daring to utter a free and fearless word, THE BLAST must live and keep up the fight. It is the only revolutionary voice on the Coast raised in behalf of our imprisoned comrades whom the masters have picked as victims of their revenge on Labor.

The enemy is prepared to kill THE BLAST. We are determined to continue its revolutionary propaganda. Nay, more: THE BLAST will bend every effort and marshal its increasing influence to expose and nip the conspiracy to hang our imprisoned friends. The enemy shall not gloat over new scaffolds erected for the most intelligent and devoted rebels of California Labor.

THE BLAST must have a War Fund of $1000.00. It must have it NOW, at once. A good friend has already contributed $100.00, and Emma Goldman $25.00. Who will be the next to respond?

ALEXANDER BERKMAN

Justice

David Leigh

IF Justice means:
The right to employ force to torture individuals in order to fasten guilt upon them;

If it means the right to invade one's privacy and carry off any material belongings which may happen to appeal to the fancy of the intruder;

If it means the right of the law's minions to sequester men and women *without warrant* and subject them to persistent discomfiture and the humiliation of enforced helplessness;

If it means the right of "officials" to not only harass imprisoned individuals with unjustifiable intrusions, but also to deny them their simplest needs, even to a cup of cold water;

If it means the utter abridgement of the right of accused persons to either see or consult with counsel;

If it means that merely on Suspicion men and women can be indicted, can be all but *hanged* before so much as a scintilla of evidence has been adduced against them;

If it means the right of uniformed bullies to jeer at and intimidate relatives and friends of accused persons;

If it means that the governing section of a community can decree the lengths and ends to which this thing called "justice" shall go, without regard to a single right of individuals—

Then I, for one, here and now declare myself for the OPPOSITE of "justice"—by whatever name it shall be called.

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